

# COVID-19 Ridership Survey Results Overview

Draft June 15, 2020



**Chicago Transit Authority**

Confidential Draft – For Internal Purposes Only

# Survey Goals

The goals of the COVID-19 Ridership Survey were to understand:

- Who was riding CTA during COVID-19 stay-at-home order
- What trip purposes customers were using the system for
- Customers' perceptions of CTA's COVID-19 safety measures
- Customers' perceptions of measures CTA should take/continue to take to keep the system safe



# Survey Design

- Email survey distributed to all ~82,000 Ventra customers opted-in to receive emails\* who rode CTA during stay-at-home order, effective March 21, 2020
- Survey open May 21 to June 1, 2020
  - 74% of respondents rode during the last two weeks of May 2020
  - Only 10% of respondents last rode during the first two weeks of the stay-at-home order (March 21 - April 3)
- 5,241 completed surveys (122 completed in Spanish)
- Response rate = 6.3%\*\*
- Results weighted to April 2020 ridership by bus route group and rail branch\*\*\*

\*Able to reach 20% of customers riding with a Ventra card during the stay-at-home order via email. The number of active customers we can reach is higher during typical times; about 30-40% of Ventra card users. The email list was comprised of 83% full fare riders, 11% student riders (including college), 3% O'Hare employee cards, 1% Senior riders, 1% Disabled riders, and <1% Military riders. Senior and disabled cards are typically registered at lower rates, and therefore opted-in to receive emails at lower rates.

\*\*Results valid at the 95% confidence level with a margin of error of +/-1.35. Good response rate given that no incentive to take the survey was provided.

\*\*\*Weighted dataset includes 4,469 responses



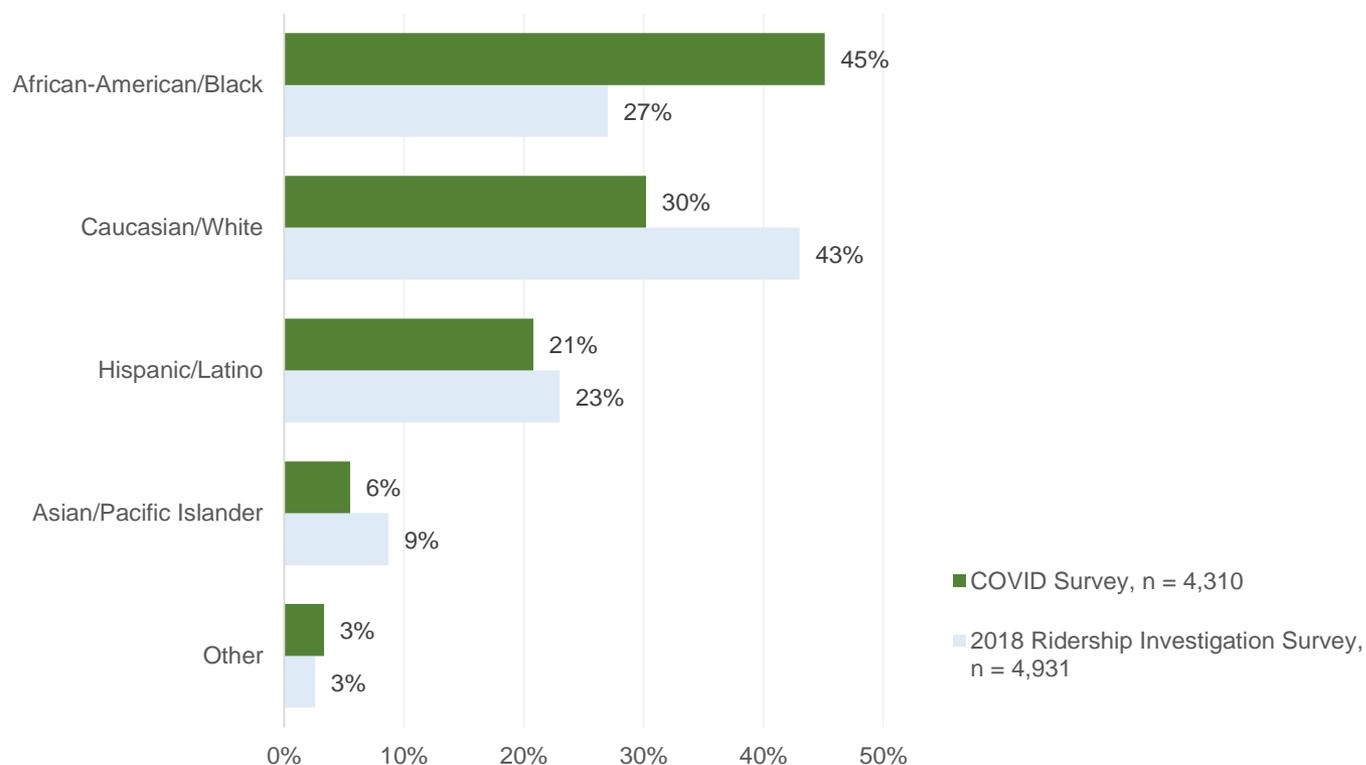
# Question topics

- Mode frequency
- Trip purposes served by CTA
- Occupation (if using CTA for work)
- Mode used to get to work if CTA not available
- Most common bus routes/rail stations used
- Satisfaction with COVID-19 safety measures on CTA
- Suggested safety measures
- Demographics



# Respondents riding during stay-at-home order were more likely to be Black and less likely to be White than typical pre-COVID survey population\*

*“Which of the following categories best describes your ethnic background?  
Select all that apply.”*

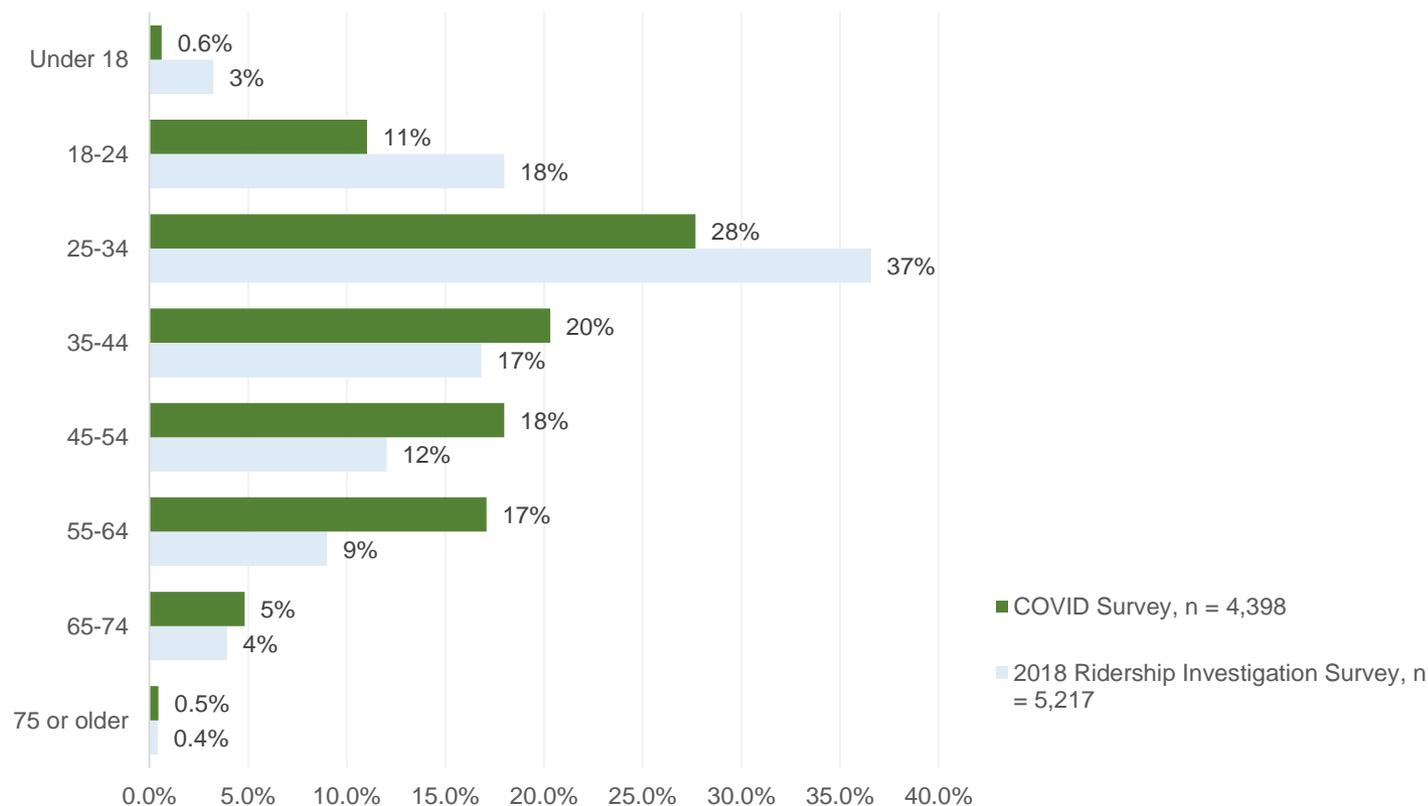


\*Responses compared with online 2018 Ridership Investigation Survey results



# Respondents riding during stay-at-home order were more likely to be older (age 35-64) than pre-COVID survey population\*

*“Which category describes your age?”*

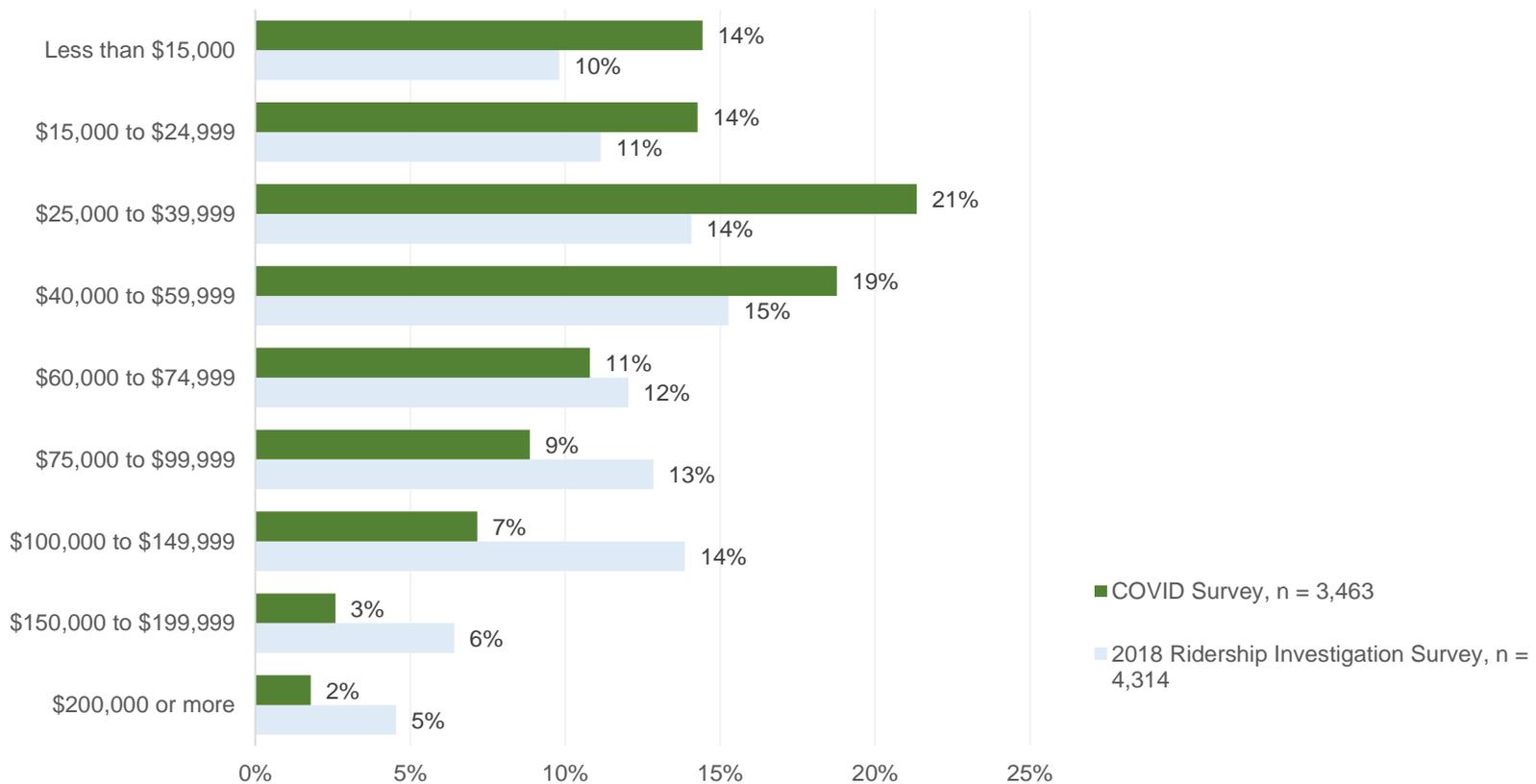


\*Responses compared with online 2018 Ridership Investigation Survey results



# Respondents riding during stay-at-home order were more likely to have lower household incomes compared with pre-COVID survey population, and less likely to be in a higher income bracket\*

*“What is your household’s approximate annual income?”*



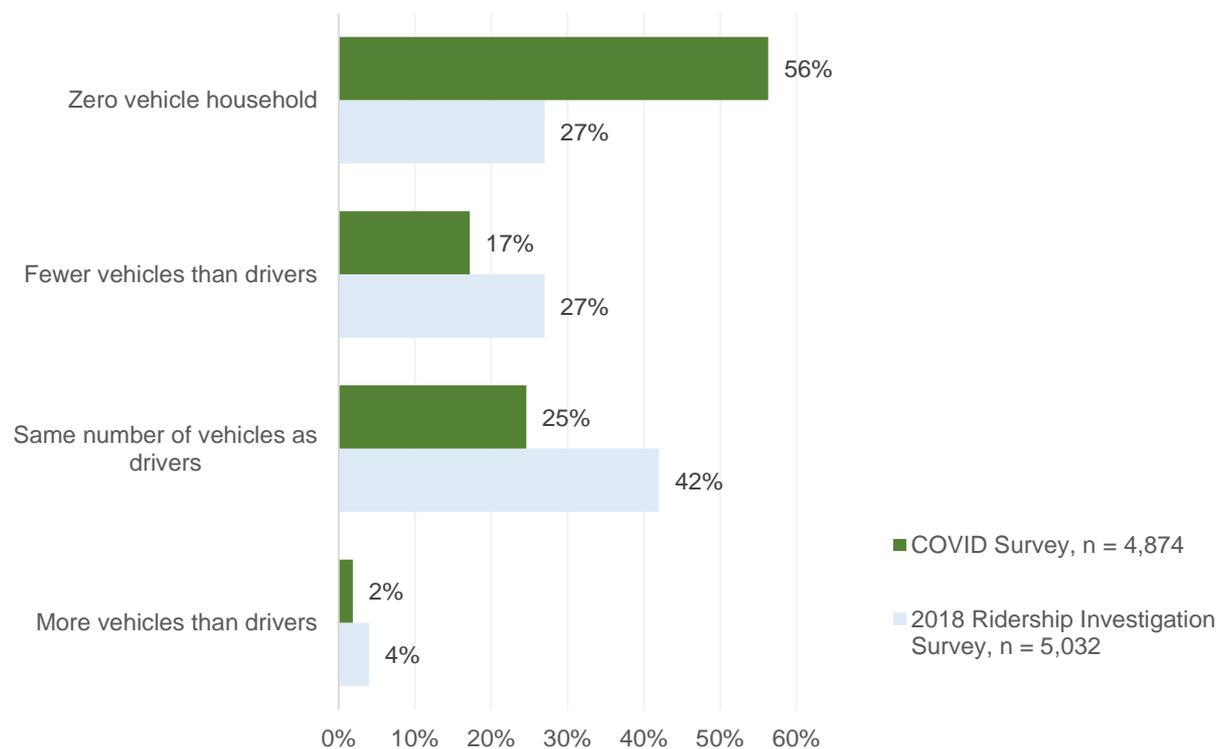
\*Responses compared with online 2018 Ridership Investigation Survey results



# Respondents riding during stay-at-home order were much more likely to live in a zero car household (56%) than pre-COVID survey population\*

*“How many licensed drivers are there in your household?”*

*“How many personal vehicles are there in your household?”*

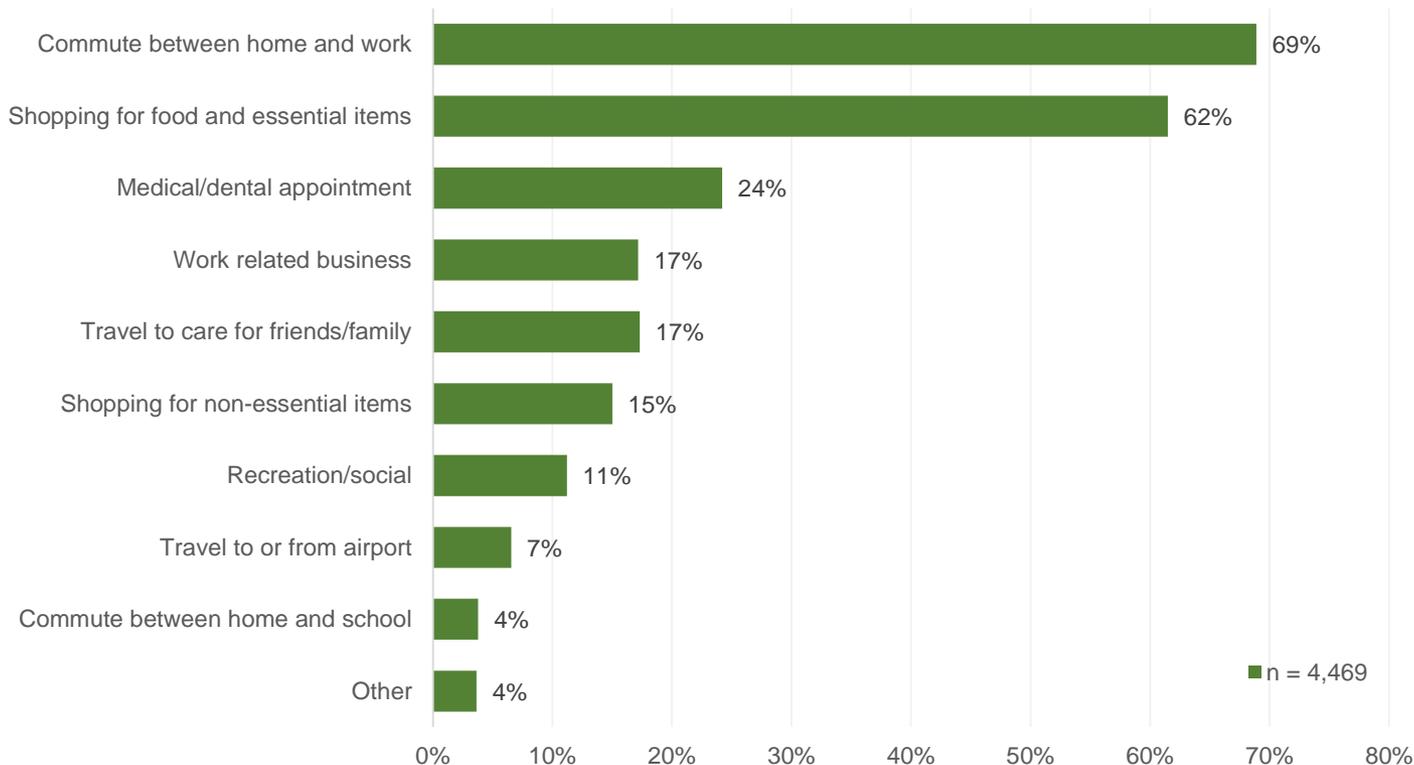


\*Responses compared with online 2018 Ridership Investigation Survey results



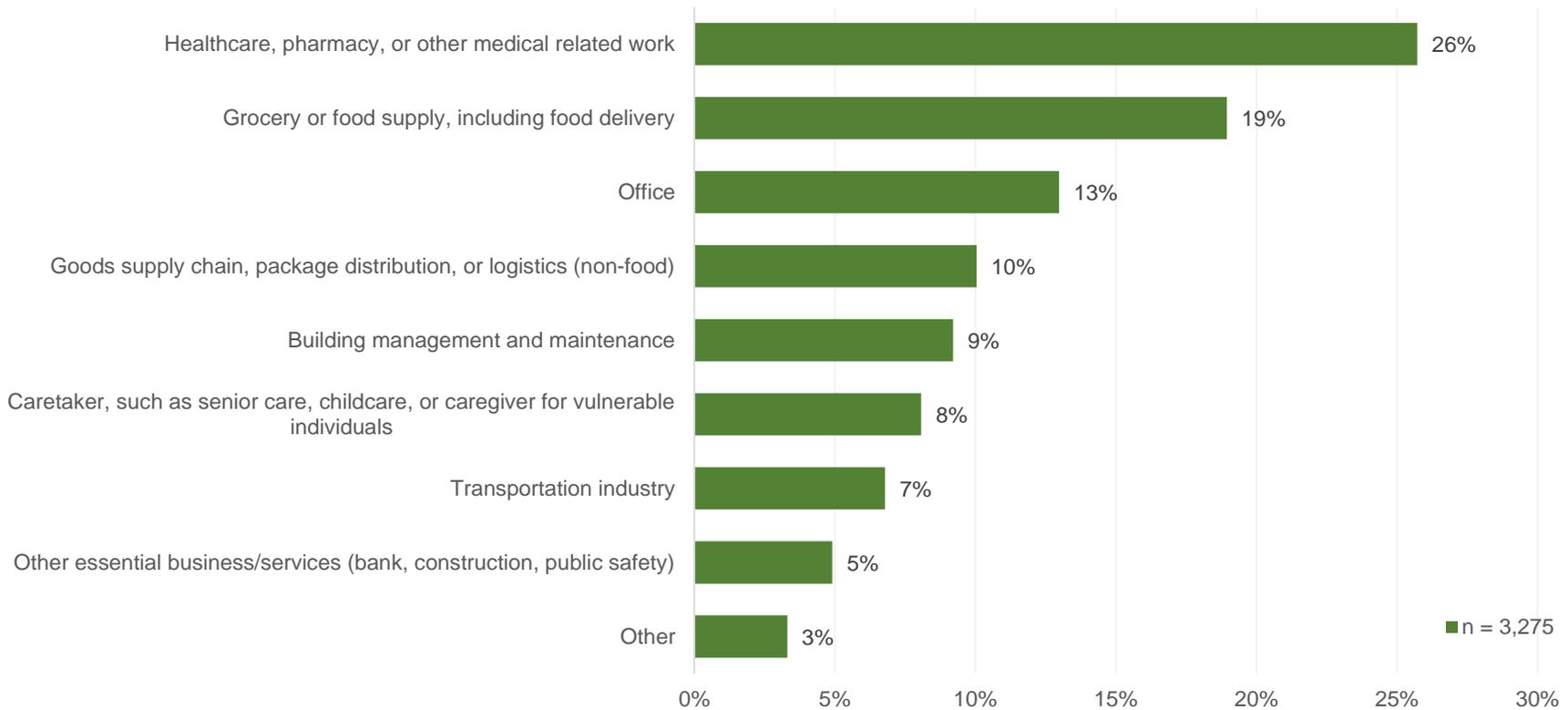
# Majority of respondents using CTA to commute or for essential shopping trips

*“For what purposes have you used the CTA since March 21, 2020?” Select all that apply*



# 19% of respondents riding during the stay-at-home order are healthcare/medical workers\*

*“What type of work do you do?”*

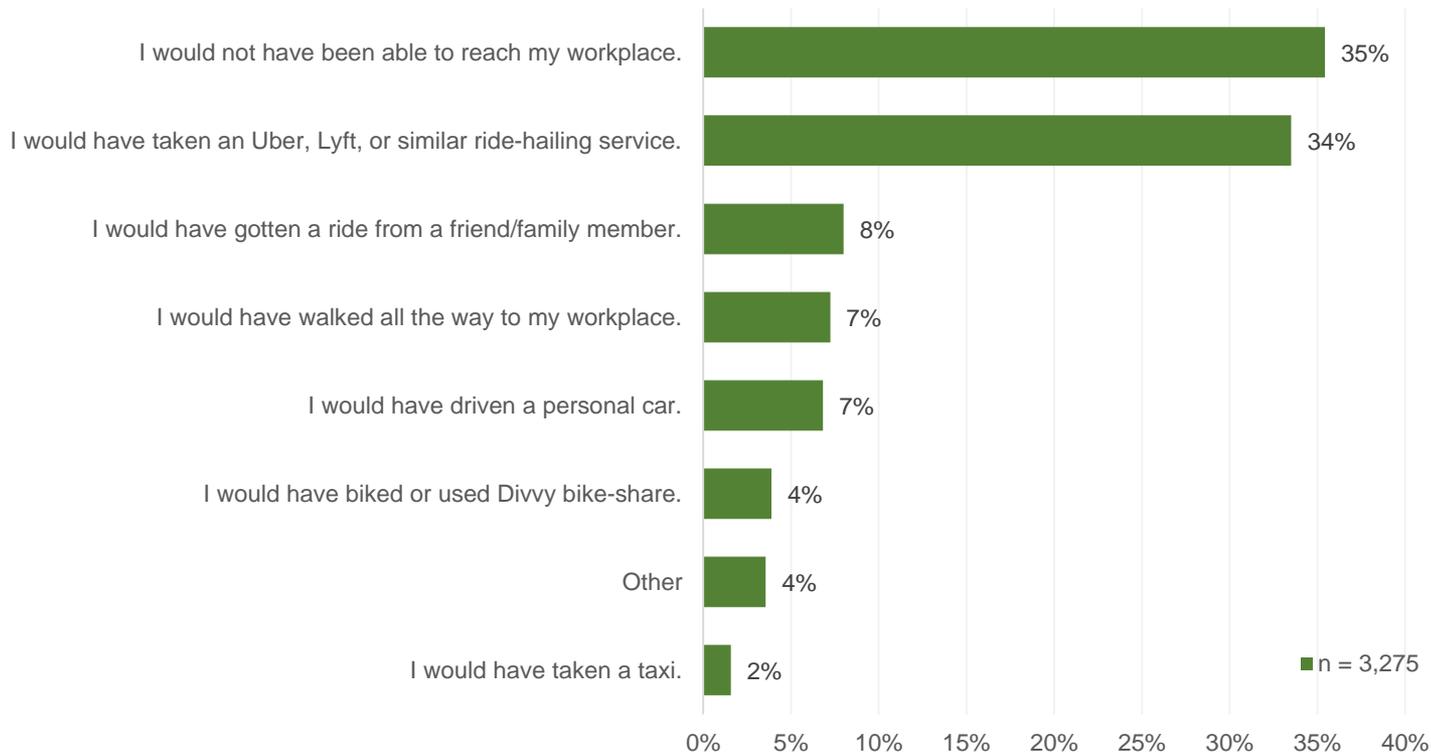


\*26% of 69% of respondents using CTA for work trips reported their occupation was healthcare/medical worker.



# 26% of respondents would not have been able to reach their workplace without CTA.

*“If CTA had not been available during this time, how would you have gotten to work?”*

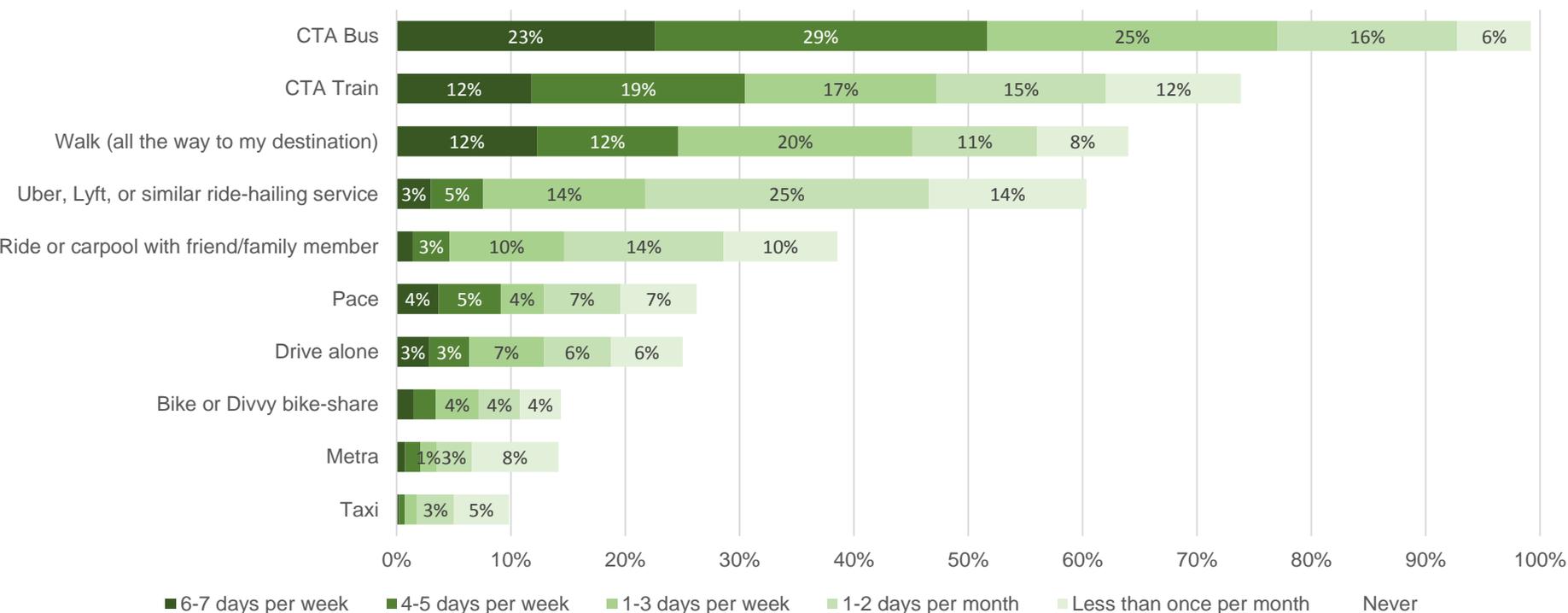


\*35% of 69% of respondents using CTA for work trips would not have been able to reach their workplace without CTA.



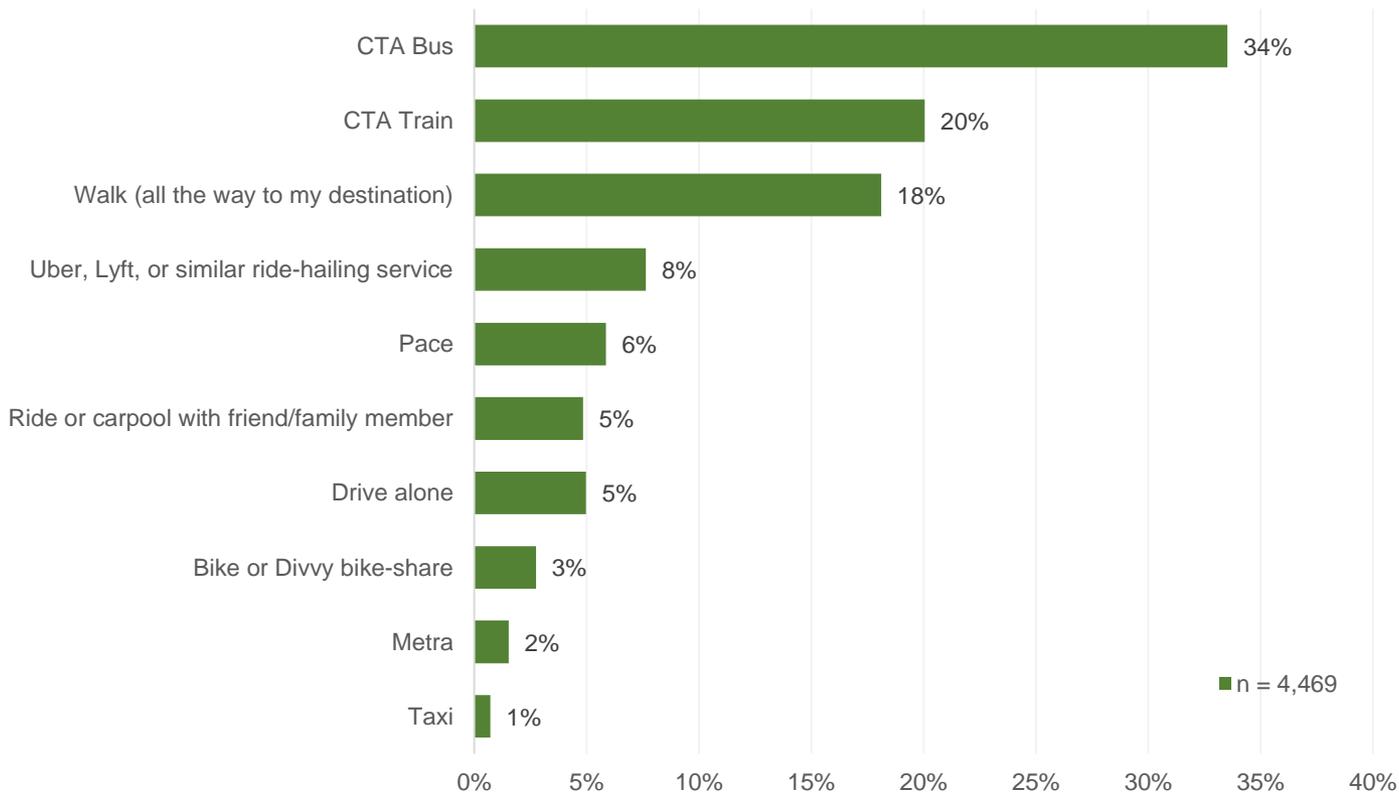
# CTA Bus was respondents' most frequently used transportation option during stay-at-home order.

*“Since March 21, 2020, how often have you typically taken the following transportation options?”*



# CTA Bus and CTA Train comprised 54% of respondents' mode share during the stay-at-home order.

## Mode Share\*

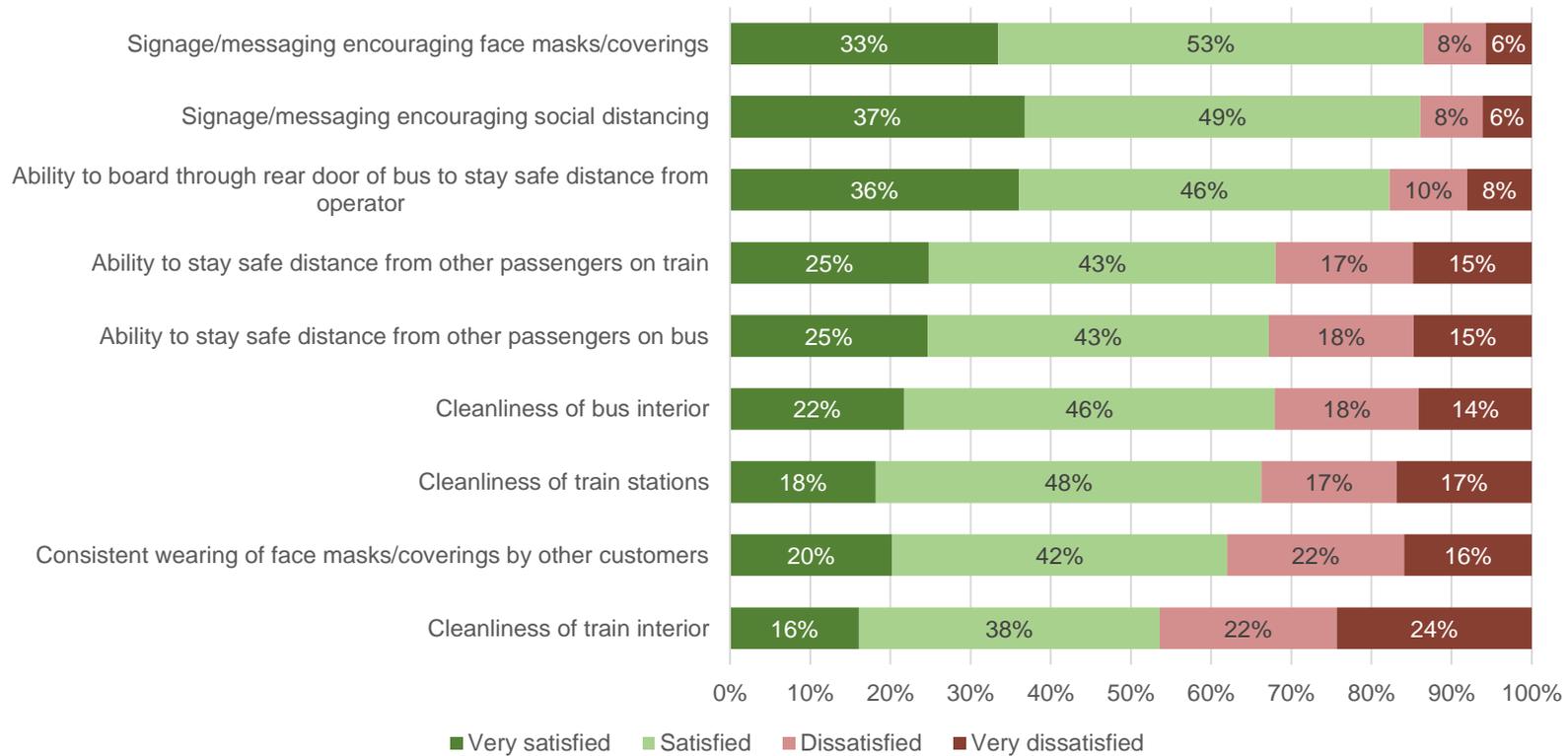


\*Calculated based on mode frequency responses.



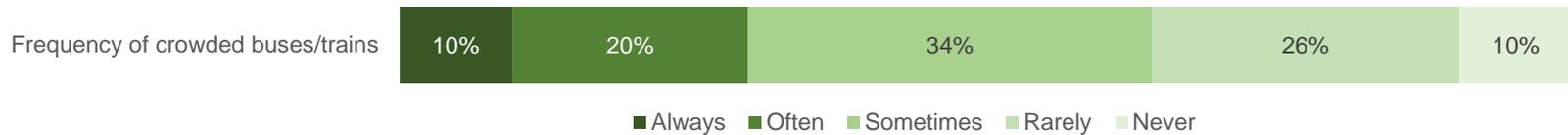
# Respondents were most satisfied with communications about safety measures and least satisfied with cleanliness of stations/vehicles and consistency of other customers wearing of face coverings

*“Thinking about your last few trips, how satisfied are you with the following conditions and safety measures on CTA during the COVID-19 emergency?”*

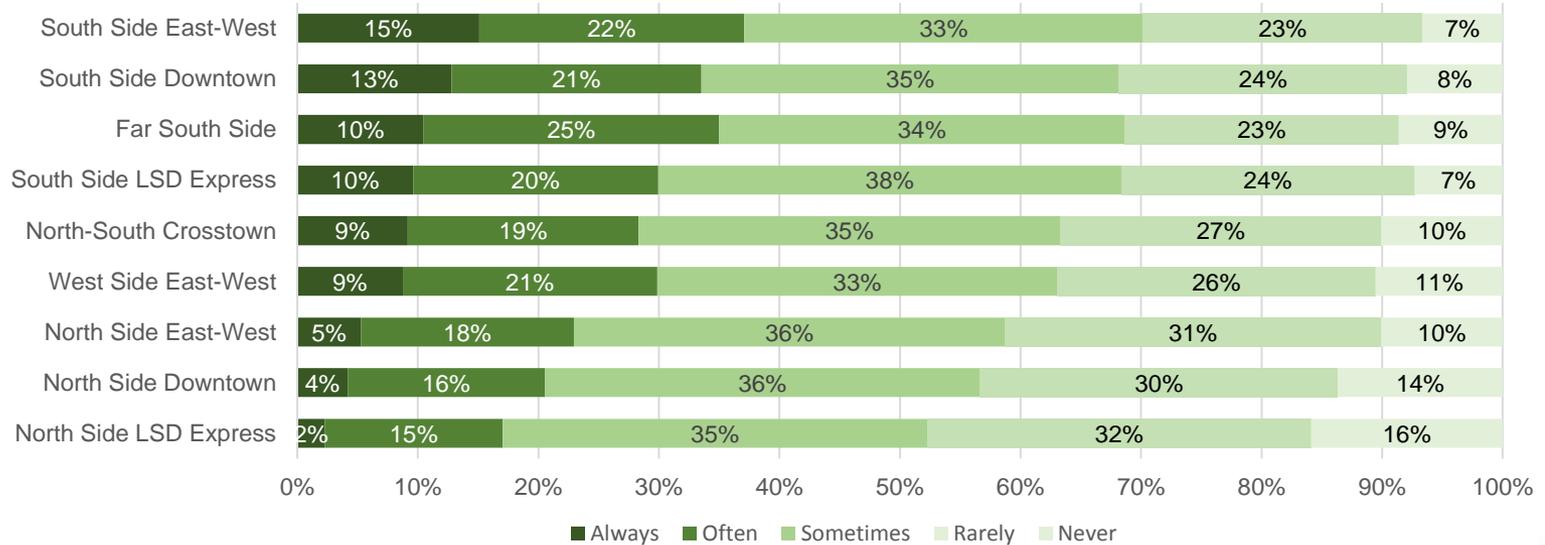


**34% of respondents indicated experiencing crowded buses or trains where they could not stay a safe distance from others some of the time. Customers using South Side bus routes were more likely to report more frequent crowding.**

*“Thinking about your last few trips, how often do you experience buses or trains where you cannot remain a safe distance from other passengers?”*



Frequency of Crowded Buses or Trains by Respondent Bus Route Group\*



\*Bus Route groups with less than 1% of survey sample/ridership excluded from chart as sample size is too small. Excluded bus route groups are: Downtown, Evanston, MDW Feeder, NW Feeder, and Special.



# Safety Measures

*“Are there other things you think CTA should be doing to help keep customers safe from the spread of COVID-19?”*

*“Please tell us about any ideas you have that would help keep customers safe when more customers begin riding again.”*

5,169 open-ended comments were provided. Most common suggestions included:

- Add service or larger vehicles
- Remove homeless population
- Ensure customers and employees are wearing masks
- Allow for social distancing by partitioning vehicles
- Deep clean buses and trains and communicate that cleaning is occurring
- Take appropriate measures to ensure COVID safety protocols are followed (masks, distancing, etc.) through signage, announcements, and enforcement
- Provide hand sanitizer
- Allow customers to enter through front door of buses (dissatisfaction with needing to touch rear door/customers congregating by back door)



# What are customers saying?

“Things have really gotten bad with behaviors (smoking, drinking, hygiene issues, crowding, threatening behaviors). I do not feel safe on the trains at this time and many of my (health care) coworkers have had the same experiences, opting for more expensive options (paying for parking, renting cars) rather than feel unsafe on the trains.”

“Clean, clean, clean, and disinfect. I ride every day and have NEVER seen that being done.”

“Enforce wearing masks. Make constant announcements about wearing masks, at every stop. This should be mandatory.”

“What has disappointed me the most is seeing ~50% of the people wearing masks without covering their noses!. Wearing masks improperly is worst than not wearing one because it gives a false sense of safety.”

“Limit the number of passengers permitted on each bus, and put extra buses on to account for it during popular times.”

“Entering through the back is safer for the driver (but they are already safer in their plexiglass box), not riders (a rider already on the bus often opens the back door and is right in your face when you board, despite kind intentions it isn't safe”

